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County Employment and Wages in Alabama – Second Quarter 2015

Employment increased in all of Alabama's six largest counties from June 2014 to June 2015, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with employment of 75,000 or more as measured by 2014 annual average employment.) Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that employment increases ranged from 3.3 percent in Tuscaloosa County to 0.1 percent in Mobile County. (See [table 1.](#))

Nationally, employment advanced 2.0 percent from June 2014 to June 2015 as 319 of the 342 largest U.S. counties registered increases. Utah, Utah, recorded the largest percentage increase in the country, up 7.5 percent over the year. Ector, Texas, had the largest over-the-year decrease in employment among the largest counties in the U.S. with a loss of 4.2 percent.

Among the six largest counties in Alabama, employment was highest in Jefferson (339,400) in June 2015, while Shelby had the smallest employment (83,800). Together, Alabama's large counties accounted for 52.5 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 342 largest counties made up 72.1 percent of total U.S. employment, which stood at 140.6 million in June 2015.

All six of Alabama's large counties posted over-the-year wage increases with Montgomery County (2.5 percent) experiencing the largest increase. Madison County had the highest average weekly wage among the state's six largest counties at \$1,051. Nationally, the average weekly wage rose 3.0 percent over the year to \$968 in the second quarter of 2015. (See [table 1.](#))

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 61 counties in Alabama with employment below 75,000. Washington (\$1,018) and Dale (\$996) were the only small counties to have an average weekly wage above the national average. (See [table 2.](#))

Large county wage changes

As noted, average weekly wages advanced in all of Alabama's large counties from the second quarter of 2014 to the second quarter of 2015. Montgomery's 2.5-percent wage increase ranked 160th among the nation's 342 large counties and was the only large county in Alabama to rank in the top half of the national ranking. Average weekly wage growth in Alabama's five other large counties ranged from 1.8 to 0.3 percent. (See [table 1.](#))

Nationally, 323 of the 342 largest counties registered over-the-year wage increases. Ventura, Calif., had the

largest wage gain, up 15.2 percent from the second quarter of 2014. Santa Clara, Calif., was second with a wage increase of 11.3 percent, followed by Forsyth, N.C. (10.9 percent), Riverside, Calif. (8.7 percent), and San Francisco, Calif. (8.6 percent).

Among the largest U.S. counties, 16 experienced over-the-year wage decreases. Olmsted, Minn., had the largest wage decline with a loss of 5.2 percent. Ector, Texas, had the second largest decrease in average weekly wages, down 5.1 percent from second quarter 2014, followed by Midland, Texas (-3.2 percent), Hillsborough, N.H. (-2.6 percent), and Lorain, Ohio (-2.1 percent).

Large county average weekly wages

Average weekly wages in 3 of Alabama's 6 largest counties placed in the top half of the national ranking among the 342 largest counties in the second quarter of 2015. Madison County (\$1,051, ranked 63rd) had the highest average weekly wage in the state, followed by Jefferson (\$945) and Shelby (\$901), which ranked 126th and 163rd, respectively. Average weekly wages in the remaining three counties placed in the bottom half of the national ranking.

Nationwide, average weekly wages were above the U.S. average (\$968) in 102 of the 342 largest counties in the second quarter of 2015. Santa Clara, Calif., recorded the highest average weekly wage at \$2,109, followed by San Mateo, Calif. (\$1,863) and New York, N.Y. (\$1,842).

Seventy percent of the largest U.S. counties (240) reported average weekly wages below the national average in the second quarter of 2015. The lowest wage was reported in Horry, S.C. (\$568), followed by the Texas counties of Cameron (\$586) and Hidalgo (\$614). Wages in these lowest-ranked counties were less than one-third of the average weekly wage reported for the highest-ranked county, Santa Clara, Calif. (\$2,109).

Average weekly wages in Alabama's smaller counties

Among the 61 counties in Alabama with employment below 75,000, Washington (\$1,018) and Dale (\$996) were the only two counties to report a weekly wage above the national average of \$968. Perry County reported the lowest weekly wage among all counties in the state, averaging \$559 in the second quarter of 2015. (See [table 2](#).)

When all 67 counties in Alabama were considered, 8 reported average weekly wages under \$600, 35 reported wages from \$600-\$699, 11 had wages from \$700-\$799, and 13 had wages above \$800. (See [chart 1](#).)

Additional statistics and other information

Quarterly data for states have been included in this release in [table 3](#). For additional information about quarterly employment and wages data, please read the [Technical Note](#) or visit the QCEW Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/cew/>.

Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2014 edition of this publication contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2015 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2014* are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn14.htm.

The County Employment and Wages release for third quarter 2015 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, March 9, 2016, at 10:00 a.m. (ET).

Technical Note

Average weekly wage data by county are compiled under the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, also known as the ES-202 program. The data are derived from summaries of employment and total pay of workers covered by state and federal unemployment insurance (UI) legislation and provided by State Workforce Agencies (SWAs). The 9.6 million employer reports cover 140.6 million full- and part-time workers. The average weekly wage values are calculated by dividing quarterly total wages by the average of the three monthly employment levels of those covered by UI programs. The result is then divided by 13, the number of weeks in a quarter. It is to be noted, therefore, that over-the-year wage changes for geographic areas may reflect shifts in the composition of employment by industry, occupation, and such other factors as hours of work. Thus, wages may vary among counties, metropolitan areas, or states for reasons other than changes in the average wage level. Data for all states, Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), counties, and the nation are available on the BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/cew/; however, data in QCEW press releases have been revised and may not match the data contained on the Bureau's Web site.

QCEW data are not designed as a time series. QCEW data are simply the sums of individual establishment records reflecting the number of establishments that exist in a county or industry at a point in time. Establishments can move in or out of a county or industry for a number of reasons—some reflecting economic events, others reflecting administrative changes.

The preliminary QCEW data presented in this release may differ from data released by the individual states as well as from the data presented on the BLS Web site. These potential differences result from the states' continuing receipt, review and editing of UI data over time. On the other hand, differences between data in this release and the data found on the BLS Web site are the result of adjustments made to improve over-the-year comparisons. Specifically, these adjustments account for administrative (noneconomic) changes such as a correction to a previously reported location or industry classification. Adjusting for these administrative changes allows users to more accurately assess changes of an economic nature (such as a firm moving from one county to another or changing its primary economic activity) over a 12-month period. Currently, adjusted data are available only from BLS press releases.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200, Federal Relay Service: 800-877-8339.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 6 largest counties in Alabama, second quarter 2015

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	June 2015 (thousands)	Percent change, June 2014-15 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, second quarter 2014-15 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	140,594.9	2.0	--	\$968	--	3.0	--
Alabama.....	1,899.3	1.3	--	819	37	1.6	41
Jefferson, Ala.....	339.4	0.4	303	945	126	1.7	252
Madison, Ala.....	186.1	1.7	183	1,051	63	0.3	319
Mobile, Ala.....	167.6	0.1	315	827	240	1.7	252
Montgomery, Ala.....	129.7	0.5	298	821	246	2.5	160
Shelby, Ala.....	83.8	2.4	130	901	163	1.8	240
Tuscaloosa, Ala.....	91.2	3.3	71	811	254	1.4	276

⁽¹⁾ Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

⁽²⁾ Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.

⁽³⁾ Ranking does not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

⁽⁴⁾ Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Alabama, 2nd quarter 2015

Area	Employment June 2015	Average Weekly Wage (¹)
United States (²)	140,594,927	\$968
Alabama	1,899,349	819
Autauga	10,567	666
Baldwin	70,839	623
Barbour	8,203	668
Bibb	4,147	713
Blount	8,091	621
Bullock	2,875	616
Butler	6,910	599
Calhoun	43,866	705
Chambers	8,078	642
Cherokee	5,114	607
Chilton	9,375	639
Choctaw	3,390	911
Clarke	8,106	705
Clay	3,806	587
Cleburne	2,156	809
Coffee	15,353	606
Colbert	23,636	778
Conecuh	3,547	642
Coosa	1,288	631
Covington	12,299	628
Crenshaw	3,799	682
Cullman	27,719	675
Dale	16,362	996
Dallas	12,640	662
DeKalb	21,108	639
Elmore	19,352	634
Escambia	12,762	697
Etowah	35,622	660
Fayette	3,915	599
Franklin	10,291	627
Geneva	4,968	570
Greene	1,803	580
Hale	2,777	627
Henry	3,354	675
Houston	47,011	728
Jackson	16,550	656
Jefferson	339,412	945
Lamar	3,391	688
Lauderdale	28,935	615
Lawrence	4,670	618
Lee	54,723	664
Limestone	23,527	830
Lowndes	2,369	847
Macon	4,728	771
Madison	186,141	1,051
Marengo	6,851	717
Marion	9,632	613
Marshall	35,053	620
Mobile	167,640	827
Monroe	6,107	750
Montgomery	129,651	821
Morgan	47,065	786

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Alabama, 2nd quarter 2015 - Continued

Area	Employment June 2015	Average Weekly Wage (¹)
Perry.....	2,110	559
Pickens.....	3,793	652
Pike.....	13,544	738
Randolph.....	4,815	573
Russell.....	13,530	667
St. Clair.....	18,804	659
Shelby.....	83,837	901
Sumter.....	2,942	678
Talladega.....	29,608	825
Tallapoosa.....	13,547	589
Tuscaloosa.....	91,225	811
Walker.....	18,414	662
Washington.....	3,575	1,018
Wilcox.....	2,745	742
Winston.....	7,294	602

(¹) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(²) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

NOTE: Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.
Data are preliminary.

Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, second quarter 2015

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	June 2015 (thousands)	Percent change, June 2014-15	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, second quarter 2014-15	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	140,594.9	2.0	\$968	--	3.0	--
Alabama	1,899.3	1.3	819	37	1.6	41
Alaska	346.6	0.4	1,028	8	2.4	30
Arizona	2,549.9	2.5	904	21	1.8	39
Arkansas	1,184.6	1.7	762	47	2.1	35
California	16,338.9	2.8	1,131	5	5.5	1
Colorado	2,517.1	3.2	989	13	3.0	13
Connecticut	1,693.1	0.9	1,177	4	2.0	38
Delaware	439.1	2.2	991	12	1.5	42
District of Columbia	745.1	1.8	1,599	1	1.8	39
Florida	7,907.7	3.6	861	28	2.6	23
Georgia	4,167.8	3.4	903	22	2.4	30
Hawaii	635.9	1.6	876	24	3.8	6
Idaho	678.5	2.9	713	50	2.3	33
Illinois	5,925.5	1.5	1,015	10	2.6	23
Indiana	2,966.0	1.7	811	40	3.4	7
Iowa	1,561.2	0.9	802	43	2.8	18
Kansas	1,382.1	0.7	819	37	2.8	18
Kentucky	1,850.5	1.7	822	35	3.0	13
Louisiana	1,930.6	0.5	850	30	0.8	47
Maine	615.8	0.8	768	46	2.9	16
Maryland	2,631.3	1.4	1,046	7	2.6	23
Massachusetts	3,488.3	2.1	1,211	2	4.7	2
Michigan	4,225.0	1.5	916	20	2.1	35
Minnesota	2,826.3	1.5	977	15	3.2	8
Mississippi	1,114.7	1.1	709	51	0.6	48
Missouri	2,746.6	1.7	842	32	2.8	18
Montana	461.5	1.8	754	48	2.7	21
Nebraska	968.7	1.2	787	44	4.1	3
Nevada	1,248.1	3.2	855	29	2.6	23
New Hampshire	647.7	1.5	967	16	1.3	46
New Jersey	4,000.2	1.5	1,126	6	2.6	23
New Mexico	808.4	0.8	805	41	1.4	44
New York	9,136.9	1.9	1,180	3	3.1	9
North Carolina	4,185.6	2.6	850	30	3.9	4
North Dakota	445.0	-1.8	939	18	0.3	50
Ohio	5,308.1	1.4	865	26	2.4	30
Oklahoma	1,591.5	0.6	818	39	0.5	49
Oregon	1,810.4	3.4	899	23	3.0	13
Pennsylvania	5,763.9	0.8	958	17	2.7	21
Rhode Island	480.0	1.5	925	19	2.9	16
South Carolina	1,963.5	2.5	782	45	2.1	35
South Dakota	428.6	1.3	740	49	3.9	4
Tennessee	2,832.1	2.8	863	27	3.1	9
Texas	11,689.4	2.4	988	14	1.5	42
Utah	1,345.9	3.9	821	36	3.1	9
Vermont	309.3	0.6	831	34	2.2	34
Virginia	3,767.2	1.7	1,000	11	2.5	29
Washington	3,197.6	3.3	1,026	9	3.1	9
West Virginia	706.5	-0.8	803	42	1.4	44
Wisconsin	2,839.8	1.0	836	33	2.6	23

Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, second quarter 2015 - Continued

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	June 2015 (thousands)	Percent change, June 2014-15	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, second quarter 2014-15	National ranking by percent change
Wyoming.....	291.5	-1.5	869	25	-0.1	51
Puerto Rico.....	884.6	-1.4	513	(3)	2.0	(3)
Virgin Islands.....	37.9	0.1	748	(3)	2.2	(3)

⁽¹⁾ Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

⁽²⁾ Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

⁽³⁾ Data not included in the national ranking.

Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Chart 1. Average weekly wages by county in Alabama, second quarter 2015

